

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Stripp to Explore Creation of New Business/Environmental Group



Announces HOPE Movement after Participating in Clean Cars Bill Signing Ceremony with Gov. Rell

Energized by the enactment of legislation establishing a greenhouse gas labeling program for new motor vehicles that will encourage consumers to purchase environmentally-friendly cars, state Representative John E. Stripp today said he will explore the possibility of creating a new organization that will promote incremental improvements to environmental quality in Connecticut.

“Hallmark of Practical Environmentalists or HOPE, the new environmental movement I will be trying to foster with like-minded business people, will focus on initiatives and projects that promote significant incremental and continuous improvements to the environment in Connecticut and elsewhere in the northeast,” said Representative Stripp, R-135th District. “It will focus on initiatives and projects similar to the greenhouse gas labeling program, which is expected to result in modest but continuous improvements in the quality of the air we breathe in Connecticut.”

The greenhouse gas labeling program, which will enable potential buyers to determine which cars are environmentally-friendly, and which ones are less so, was signed into law by Governor M. Jodi Rell at a bill signing ceremony Tuesday, July 25th at McMahon Ford in Norwalk.

Representative Stripp, who cosponsored the legislation and helped round up Republican support for the measure (Senate Bill 660, An Act Concerning Clean Cars) when it was stalled in the state House of Representatives, participated in the ceremony with Governor Rell and other state legislators.

Under the new law, labels that detail a car’s greenhouse gas score must be affixed to all new vehicles beginning with 2007 models. The label will provide the new vehicle’s score as well as data showing how it compares to others of the same make and year, and the average score for vehicles within the same class. The labeling program gets underway October 1, 2007.

“Although this new law will not mean major overall improvements to air quality in Fairfield County and elsewhere in Connecticut will take place overnight, it is an

important step in that direction,” Representative Stripp said. “When it is combined with initiatives that we have put on the books over the past few years, and others I expect to be enacted in the near future, it will mean cleaner air for all of us.”

Recent examples include a Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative supported by Connecticut and six other states and regulations to implement the second phase of the California Low Emission Vehicle program, Representative Stripp said.

“I plan on spending the next six to 12 months exploring with businesspeople and practical environmentalists the idea of starting a new movement that will focus on incremental but significant and continuing environmental improvements similar to the process used by business and industry to constantly refine and improve the quality of their products,” Representative Stripp said.

“Many significant incremental improvements that have contributed to a cleaner, healthier environment in our country have been made over the years by American companies that never received the public recognition they deserved – even when their ideas led to more progress in furthering environmental quality,” Representative Stripp said.

“Over the past 40 years, most of the country’s focus has been on major governmental environmental initiatives,” Representative Stripp said. “However, I believe we can achieve as much – and possibly even more success - by using a continuous incremental approach to improving environmental quality that is similar to the technique companies use to improve their products over time. That is the approach I hope to encourage through the HOPE movement.”

“I believe this kind of approach to improving environmental quality will draw significant support from Connecticut’s business community,” Representative Stripp said. “HOPE will encourage and give credit to entrepreneurs who make significant incremental advances in their products that help improve the environment - such as Ford’s SUV hybrid, which can carry most of a lacrosse team’s members and gets 32 miles per gallon around town.”